



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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- ENS DIGEST 1
- Executive Council adopts amended 1992 budget, struggles with response to racism (92139) 7
- Religious community disappointed with Earth Summit, calls for stronger action (92140) 11
- Site of Earth Summit is symbol of world's problems (92141) 15
- Religious leaders support suspension of negotiations with South African government (92142) 17
- Presiding bishop files court brief urging reversal of capital punishment decision (92143) 18
- Panamanian bishop criticizes Bush visit as 'a purely political move' (92144) 20
- Report on racism audit predicts continuing resistance to change (92145) 21
- Dialogue with Roman Catholics moves ahead despite obstacles (92146) 23
- Bishop marches in gay pride parade to promote tolerance (92147) 24

■ Presiding bishop will visit black congregations in four states (92148)	25
■ Seamen's Church Institute sets exchange program with Russian maritime union (92149)	26
■ NEWSBRIEFS (92150)	28
■ NEWSFEATURES	
Excerpts from the presiding bishop's address to the Executive Council (92151)	35
Statement from the Worldwide Anglican Encounter (92152)	41



news digest

92139D

Executive Council adopts amended 1992 budget, struggles with response to racism

The Executive Council, meeting June 15-19 in Albuquerque, adopted changes in the 1992 budget as proposed by the presiding bishop, reducing spending to 68.3 percent of the budget approved at last summer's General Convention.

In his address from the chair, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning said, "In no area of our life are we more challenged to be the church than in the eradication of racism." He reported on his visit to Los Angeles shortly after the riots and said that "grim days in urban areas of our nation....showed us that the task is great, the time is now, as tensions went from simmer to boil."

The council also heard an update on the church's efforts to fight racism, sought ways to provide financial stability for the Philippine Episcopal Church, heard reports on the church's long-range planning strategy and authorized the presiding bishop to end the church's divestment and sanctions campaign when Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the South African Council of Churches are convinced South Africa is moving toward an open democracy.

(Page 7)

92140D

Religious community disappointed with Earth Summit, calls for stronger action

Thousands of environmentalists representing community and advocacy groups expressed disappointment with the official documents released at the recent United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the so-called "Earth Summit."

The Bush administration contended that proposed treaties to protect the environment would hamper economic growth. Faced with the certainty of weakened treaties, more than 2,000 people from a variety of organizations convened in separate, parallel meetings and wrote their own set of treaties, more comprehensive and forceful than the ones signed by official delegations to UNCED.

Members of the religious community in Rio insisted that the environmental movement and social and economic justice are linked. "We need to make UNCED come alive in our churches so people begin to understand the relation between our consumption and poverty around the world," said Don Clark, a member of the United Church of Christ who was in Rio. (Page 11)

92141D

Site of Earth Summit is symbol of world's problems

International visitors to the recent Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro discovered that it was a symbol of many of the problems in the world today--especially of the increasing gap between rich and poor.

Many claimed that the city had been "sanitized" and that the government was not letting visitors see the "real Rio." The environmental and economic problems of the city and its children were nevertheless apparent; as world leaders gathered under the glare of television lights, children were playing in nearby sewers.

Episcopal Bishop Sydney Ruiz of Rio de Janeiro called on visitors to provide financial support for organizations that respond to the poverty and social injustice. He also insisted that there was a spiritual dimension to the solutions. "Social concerns of the church should not be paternalistic, but should deal with the inner problems," Ruiz said. (Page 15)

92142D

Religious leaders support suspension of negotiations with South African government

Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other South African religious leaders have endorsed the decision by the African National Congress (ANC) to suspend dialogue with the South African government. The suspension was

declared by the ANC in the wake of a June massacre of more than 40 people in Boipatong township south of Johannesburg.

Tutu joined ANC president Nelson Mandela in demanding that the South African government investigate the recent massacre and prosecute those responsible. Tutu also suggested that the South African Olympic team should either withdraw or be barred from participation in this summer's Olympic Games if the government does not carry out a thorough investigation and reform of the security police.

In the United States, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning described the recent violence as "deplorable," and suggested that Americans might have to reevaluate the South African government's credibility. "The failure of the government to secure the peace and stop the violence has eroded confidence in the process towards the establishment of a nonracial democracy," Browning said. (Page 17)

92143D

Presiding bishop files court brief urging reversal of capital punishment decision

Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning filed an amicus curiae, or "friend of the court," brief in the Supreme Court of California on June 5 seeking to overturn a capital punishment decision.

Browning contended that prosecutors in the trial of convicted murderer Alfred Sandoval unfairly quoted or paraphrased biblical passages to bolster their call for the death penalty. "The church finds it offensive that the state attempted to persuade a jury to impose capital punishment by invoking biblical passages," Browning said in the brief. "This is particularly troublesome to the church when...the state's position on capital punishment is contrary to that taken by most mainline religious denominations, and the state's professed interpretation of the Bible in support of its position is plainly contrary to accepted religious thought as enunciated by a broad spectrum of religious scholars." (Page 18)

92144D

Panamanian bishop criticizes Bush visit as 'a purely political move'

Bishop James Ottley, who is vice-president of the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops, described the recent visit of U.S. President George Bush to Panama as "a purely political move rather than something that would benefit the Panamanian people or even improve relations between the two countries."

Ottley criticized Bush for repeatedly boasting that the United States was "the greatest and the best" nation in the world. "He wouldn't say that in Japan or Germany or England. Why say it here?" Ottley asked. "As a Panamanian, I felt very let down. He showed a total disregard for Panamanian autonomy and an insensitivity to our people."

Bush's visit was cut short when he was prevented from speaking at an outdoor rally in Panama City after riot police dispersed tear gas to break up anti-U.S. demonstrators on nearby streets. (Page 20)

92145D

Report on racism audit predicts continuing resistance to change

Confronting institutional racism in the Episcopal Church is a complicated process and will probably meet resistance, according to the just-released report analyzing the racism audit taken at General Convention last summer.

The racism audit was a 58-question survey about racial attitudes completed by nearly 1,600 people, including bishops, deputies, Episcopal Church Women Triennial delegates and visitors at the convention.

The report recommended that the church design, with professional consultants, a program to address race relations and the conflict that some feel between following the Gospel message and the need to encourage cultural diversity. (Page 21)

92146D

Dialogue with Roman Catholics moves ahead despite obstacles

Despite a chill in relations between Anglicans and the Vatican, dialogue between Episcopalians and Roman Catholics has "a lot of new energy," said the Rev. Christopher Agnew, the Episcopal Church's associate ecumenical officer, after a recent meeting in Baltimore.

After discussing the Vatican's "disappointing" response to the report of the first Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue, participants moved quickly to a discussion of practical ways the two churches could cooperate. Ecumenical officers of both churches will continue to meet nationally and regionally, a drafting team will write a common eucharistic prayer, and issues such as intermarriage and migration of clergy between the churches will be high on the agenda. (Page 23)

92147D

Bishop marches in gay pride parade to promote tolerance

The escalating violence against gays and lesbians prompted the bishop of El Camino Real, Richard Shimpfky, to lead a church contingent of clergy and laypersons in the gay pride parade in San Jose, California, on June 14.

"The appalling silence of decent people in positions of leadership and the demonization of gay people by right-wing officials and 'traditional values' groups is largely responsible for this violence," said Shimpfky prior to the parade.

Shimpfky, who marched in the parade between services at Trinity Cathedral was touched by the numbers of people in the parade who spoke of the pain of family members who were homosexual, many with tears in their eyes. "If I have helped to heal some wounds today, then I am doing my job," Shimpfky said. (Page 24)

92148D

Presiding bishop will visit black congregations in four states

As part of efforts to underscore the church's fight against racism, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning will visit black congregations and community organizations in Connecticut, South Carolina, Tennessee and Illinois, July 23-27.

"The tour will enable the presiding bishop to make personal contact with priests and laity responsible for ministries of several outstanding congregations in the African-American community," said the Rev. Harold Lewis, the staff officer for black ministries, who arranged the trip and will accompany the presiding bishop. (Page 25)

92149D

Seamen's Church Institute plans exchange program with Russian maritime union

Representatives of the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI), an ecumenical, voluntary agency affiliated with the Episcopal Church, visited Russia recently at the invitation of a Russian maritime union. The purpose of the visit was to share ideas and programs for the spiritual care of maritime workers in the former Soviet Union, based on the SCI model in the ports of New York and New Jersey.

The SCI team visited unions in Moscow, Riga, Odessa and St. Petersburg to explore exchanges of personnel, beginning this fall. "We have a potential to make a real difference," said Jean Smith, director of the SCI facility in Newark, New Jersey. "We have a ministry to the world, an opportunity to respond to issues of humanitarian need, justice and advocacy-- and spiritual nurture."

SCI provides hospitality, counseling, emergency assistance and basic human rights advocacy for thousands of seafarers. (Page 26)

92139

Executive Council adopts amended 1992 budget, struggles with response to racism

by James Solheim

Budgets, long-range planning and the persistent issue of racism were among the issues high on the agenda of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church at its June 15-19 meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The council took a realistic look at the 1992 budget and endorsed a proposal by Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning that program priorities should be funded at 68.3 percent of the budget approved at last summer's General Convention.

There was some grumbling, however, that council members did not have a sufficiently clear picture of the financial situation. "We took action in complete faith in the process--but also complete ignorance," George Lockwood of Hawaii said during a plenary. "We need to know what changes are being made and who is affected." He asked for better information for the November meeting of the council in Long Island.

If the church receives contributions above the \$40,515,000 amended budget, the council urged the presiding bishop to consider augmenting funds allocated for the Coalition for Human Need, which is currently funded at 52 percent in the amended 1992 budget. The coalition makes grants to community-based groups addressing issues of social and economic justice.

"The cut sends the wrong message to those who are looking to the church as a compassionate court of last resort," said the Rev. Austin Cooper of Cleveland. In the wake of the Los Angeles riots, he argued that it is important that the church indicate that it is "serious about being identified with the poor and marginalized since they are the very people who are fighting against the sin of racism."

The council balked, however, at taking \$140,000 out of the 1991 surplus for the coalition. "Why set aside money for a rainy day when it is raining now?" asked Bishop Charlie McNutt, Jr., of Central Pennsylvania. He argued that the coalition has been "a very significant force in the life of the church for 15 years."

Los Angeles riots heighten racism issue

Browning raised the racism issue in his address from the chair during the opening plenary session (see Newsfeatures for text). "In no area of our

life are we more challenged to be the church than in the eradication of racism," he said. He reminded the council that "we committed ourselves to an intense effort against racism in Phoenix and the General Convention set our course. It did not take the fires of Los Angeles to illuminate this for us." Instead, the "grim days in urban areas of our nation...showed us that the task is great, the time is now, as tensions went from simmer to boil."

The presiding bishop reported on his visit to Los Angeles following the outbreak of violence, where he found people "whose souls were deeply wounded--there were deep wounds to all races and pain enough for everyone."

Browning quickly added that he also found signs of hope, "grief and horror transformed by human caring and compassion." He said that he will return to California on June 21 to be with the people of Compton, "a community that is 98-percent black and that has suffered great devastation and deep wounding. It is very clear to me that the church must make a continuing witness of our solidarity with those who struggle to rebuild, to heal the wounds and to be instruments of transformation."

The presiding bishop added, "I know sin when I see it--this is sin. Let us not shrink from naming it for what it is. This is deep sin that was bred in greed and leads on to violence, to the death of hope, of dreams, and to tragic waste of human potential."

Anguish and sorrow

Small groups composed of council members and staff discussed the presiding bishop's address and later passed a resolution that expressed "anguish and sorrow at the outbreak of violence in Los Angeles over the acquittal of four police officers in the Rodney King case." The council commended the "ministry of presence" by the presiding bishop and the bishops of the diocese. The resolution also called on all commissions and committees of the General Convention and council, as well as dioceses and congregations, "to respond to the crisis of racism through efforts of understanding, education, tolerance, reconciliation, healing, prophetic witness and love as this church is called to live out the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In a related resolution, the council authorized the presiding bishop "to act on its behalf to end the church's divestment and sanctions campaign against South Africa in the event Archbishop Tutu and the South African Council of Churches call for an end to the sanctions campaign." Browning said that Tutu is convinced that sanctions should not be lifted "until the future is clearer--and that may not be any time soon."

Diane Porter, executive for Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries, gave council members an update on the church's work with the issue of

racism. "Some think that we have started slowly, but we are trying to be deliberate in the hope that we can make changes in hearts and souls, not just adjusting programs," she said. Council members received copies of the racism audit taken at last summer's General Convention.

Keeping promises to the Philippine Church

The council's partnerships committee presented a rather complex plan to provide financial support for the Philippine Episcopal Church (PEC), a former diocese of the Episcopal Church that became an autonomous province of the Anglican Communion in 1990.

A covenant ratified by the 1988 General Convention has not been implemented, "leading to deep frustration and disappointment among church leaders that our promises have not been kept," according to Canon Lloyd Casson of New York. And other missionary dioceses moving toward autonomy are watching closely for some indications of how they will be treated. "Our integrity is at stake," Casson said.

Bishop Don Wimberly of Lexington expressed his concern that the council would be establishing a policy leading to some false expectations. He said that could have an enormous impact on the church's budget.

The plan called for a reduction in grant support from the Episcopal Church over a 15-year period and a request that the Philippine Church set aside a portion of that grant to support its program and a pension plan.

Lynn Johnson, speaking for the Joint Committee for the Philippine Covenant, said that it is "urgent that we solve the problem because time is running out for the Philippine Church." She said that the committee was particularly frustrated with the slow response of the Church Pension Fund in attempts to provide a "safety net" before the PEC clergy must leave the pension plan in 1996. A council resolution requested a response by September 1, 1992.

Long-range planning moves ahead

"We are moving from vision to how our decision making works--going to specifics, with all the complexities that involves," said Bishop Rustin Kimsey of Eastern Oregon, chair of the planning and development committee. The council has been working on a strategy for long-range planning for almost three years, trying to involve all levels of the church in the process.

The Rev. Abigail Hamilton of Newark said that the Executive Council retreat last winter in Mundelein, Illinois, had identified the issues. "We have come to the point where we can say, here are the issues, and this is how we will deal with them, based on who we say we are as a church," she told the

council.

With the help of consultant Helen Spector, the committee is sorting through all responses from the retreat and will make a major report at the November council meeting. "We are still pulling together the sources of strength in the church--determining what is being done now, what are the sources of support and where are the gaps," Spector said. "Our goal is to provide a whole new context in which to view the mission of the church," she added.

In other actions, the council

- elected two new members--Elton Murdock, treasurer of the Diocese of Fort Worth, and Toni Gilbert, a businesswoman from East Tennessee;
- enjoyed the hospitality of members of the Diocese of Rio Grande and journeyed to Santa Fe for a presentation and dinner in homes;
- learned of continuing tensions in Haiti from Bishop Luc Garnier;
- heard a report on the Worldwide Anglican Encounter from council members Sally Bucklee, Pamela Chinnis, Joyce McConnell and Judy Conley and received a statement from participants (see Newsfeatures);
- learned that the subscription base for *Episcopal Life* has declined to 170,000 and the board of governors for the publication is urging a marketing and strategy promotion;
- supported the presiding bishop's letter to members of Congress "raising concerns about efforts to weaken Securities and Exchange Commission rules regarding shareholder proposals on social responsibility"; and
- bid farewell to Joyce McConnell of Olympia who has been on council for seven years.

92140

Religious community disappointed with Earth Summit, calls for stronger action

by Ethan Flad

Despite worldwide coverage of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), alternative meetings in Rio de Janeiro may contribute more to solving the world's environmental crisis.

Thousands of representatives of community and advocacy groups expressed disappointment with the official documents released at the so-called "Earth Summit," as did many members of official national delegations.

Although two treaties--one on "biodiversity," which seeks to protect the world's plant and animal life, and one on climate change, which seeks to place restrictions on the causes of global warming--were signed by 153 nations, members of grass-roots organizations and delegates from developing countries claimed that the treaties were weak and would not lead to global action. "The watering down of the global climate change treaty with immoral posturing and misrepresentation [by the U.S. government] was inexcusable," said the Rev. William Somplatsky-Jarman, chair of the National Council of Churches eco-justice working group.

The slogan "*Fora Bush!*" (Go Home Bush) was splattered across banners and chanted throughout daily protest rallies marking the final week of the conference, a clear sign that most participants disagreed with the U.S. contention that the treaties would hamper economic growth.

"I did not come here to apologize," said President George Bush in defense of his position during a June 12 speech to the Earth Summit. "America's record on environmental protection is second to none," Bush claimed.

A turning point

Faced with the certainty of weakened treaties, and unable to play a role in the negotiations, more than 2,000 representatives of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) associated with the United Nations convened in separate, parallel meetings and wrote their own set of treaties, more comprehensive and forceful than the ones signed by the governments.

Although NGOs--especially representatives from indigenous groups and women's organizations--were frustrated with the formal Earth Summit meetings, they took the opportunity to make contacts and build networks.

The Rev. Franklin Vilas, chair of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark's environmental commission, compared UNCED's influence on the environmental movement to the 1963 March on Washington's influence on the civil rights movement: "To some, nothing seemed to be happening at the actual events. But each one will have had a profound effect though a rise in consciousness."

"History is going to show this as a turning point in our treatment of the Earth if we are going to leave anything for future generations," added the Rev. James E. McJunkin, Sr., an American Baptist minister from Shaker Heights, Ohio.

Religious communities focus on 'eco-justice'

The voices of the religious community were raised in prayer and advocacy throughout the various meetings in Rio. An interfaith vigil on June 4 attracted more than 10,000 participants--perhaps the largest single gathering during the summit in Rio, and one of the few activities to welcome local residents.

While others negotiated environmental treaties, advocates from faith communities brought a unique spiritual quality and an urgent call for "eco-justice," the idea that concerns about ecology and economic justice are intertwined.

Religious activists asserted that an increased consciousness of environmental concerns must lead to lifestyle changes. In particular, they sharply confronted the pattern of overconsumption in the United States. "If the message at Rio is 'We are going to maintain the status quo at any cost,' people are not going to go down gracefully, especially the poor," noted the Rev. Al Cohen, a United Church of Christ minister from Pasadena, California.

Moral obligation to tell the truth

The U.S. religious community left Rio determined to address overconsumption at home. "The U.S. churches have a moral obligation to tell the truth about the real issue at UNCED," said Dr. Jean Sindab, program director for environmental and economic justice at the National Council of Churches. "It's not jobs versus the environment, as the multinational corporations and the Bush administration would like you to believe. It's overproduction and overconsumption on the part of the developed nations," she said.

"We need to make UNCED come alive in our churches so people begin to understand the relation between our consumption and poverty around the world," added Don Clark, a United Church of Christ delegate. "We're beyond the point where we can say that being smart about our lifestyles is

enough. Now it's time to change our lifestyles, to use less energy, to live simpler and to eat foods that are lower on the food chain."

Two people of color from the U.S. religious community called on Americans to take personal action. "As you point a finger at someone else, you are pointing three fingers at yourself. Who are you really pointing at?" said Chief Johnson of the Onondaga Nation.

"God didn't say 'appreciate' justice or 'encourage' justice; he said *do* justice. If justice was being done, if it was indeed 'flowing like a mighty river' as it says in the Book of Amos, none of us could look at our environment and not be called to act," said an African-American religious leader.

A street organizer, speaking at the Parliamentary Earth Summit, called on the churches to lead in integrating religion and social issues. "We need a new religious order," he said, "with the Bible in one hand, and a book on political economics in the other."

Religious leaders propose specific action

The Rt. Rev. Sydney Ruiz, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Brazil, supported this call by quoting the theologian Nicolas Berdyaev: "If you are hungry, that's your material problem; but if your brother is hungry, that's your spiritual problem."

Religious persons decided to follow up on the issues and debates from UNCED in four specific ways. First, they intend to continue and to increase the religious voice in the environmental movement. For example, religious workshops focusing on spirituality and on eco-justice are being planned for a September 24-27 UNCED follow-up conference in East Lansing, Michigan.

Second, religious leaders intend to take leadership roles in organizing dialogues among religious groups, legislative representatives, and grass-roots organizations. At the Parliamentary Earth Summit, they supported efforts to organize local environmental conferences. "I want us to have state-by-state parliamentary forums involving spiritual leaders, statespersons, women, youth, scientists, grass-roots activists," said the Rev. Susan Dulany, who has organized conferences in the Diocese of Georgia.

Third, religious leaders intend to support legislation that would increase awareness of and improve the environment. One proposal currently before Congress, known as the "Environmental Justice Act of 1992," would authorize a study of 100 counties in the United States with dangerous toxic waste sites and call for local input on how to clean up the sites.

Fourth, religious leaders intend to pressure the United Nations to adopt an "Earth Charter" by 1995--the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. The

charter would outline the personal and corporate responsibilities involved in environmental awareness. Although UNCED delegates adopted a statement known as the "Rio Declaration" at the close of the conference, many religious leaders said that it lacked the simplicity and spiritual dimension needed in a charter. The Rio Declaration "is not a charter to inspire people who love this planet," said the Rt. Rev. Paul Reeves, Anglican Observer at the United Nations, in calling for passage of an Earth Charter.

Small steps forward

Several activists were not pleased with what they characterized as the slow pace of leadership by the national Episcopal Church on environmental concerns. "I want the Episcopal Church to take a leadership role on this issue, and it has not," said the Rev. Peter Kreidler, director of Earth Service, Inc., in Santa Monica, California.

Ironically, some Americans from other religious communities credited Episcopalians with tremendous leadership on the environment. "The Episcopal Church, and the whole Anglican Communion, has played a large role in bringing in justice and peace concerns to the environmental debate," said Sylvia Diss of the North American Coalition on Religion and Ecology, based in Washington, DC.

Activists left the conference determined to change their personal habits and to educate their communities on the gravity of the earth's condition. "I want to have one-on-one meetings with every clergy member of my diocese," announced Sally Bingham, chair of the Diocese of California's Environmental Commission, "and I want to integrate environment into the structure of our diocesan life."

The challenge to Bingham and the tens of thousands of other concerned human beings who attended the Earth Summit is an overwhelming one: to save the planet and its peoples from a multitude of problems on an uncertain timetable. The Earth Summit was a small, initial step in this process.

--Ethan Flad is staff assistant for environment and special projects for Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries at the Episcopal Church Center.

92141

Site of Earth Summit is symbol of world's problems

by Ethan Flad

A bumper sticker with the words, "El Centro do Mundo" (the Center of the World) decorated every yellow cab in Rio de Janeiro during the June Earth Summit. The sticker's slogan presented an ironic truth for international visitors: Rio is a symbol of many of the problems in the world today.

One of the most populous cities on the planet, with an estimated 11 million people, and a cosmopolitan city with a unique blend of races, cultures and topography, Rio is also an excellent reflection of the increasing gap between rich and poor worldwide.

The intense poverty visible in Brazil swiftly emerged as a priority for members of the international religious community at the Earth Summit. In close proximity to one another, gleaming office towers and dilapidated shacks were a visible illustration of the gap.

Throughout the Earth Summit, voices and faces representing Brazil's estimated 7 million street children challenged the pleasantries and decorum of the meetings. At the Parliamentary Earth Summit, a conference of international legislative and religious leaders, each session was opened by testimonies from Rio's street children.

"I saw seven of my friends murdered by the police," one homeless child told participants of the summit. A 16-year-old named Brutu said that "the police are very violent, and because of the Earth Summit they are taking children and prostitutes and hiding them."

The children's assertions were echoed by other citizens of Rio. Many claimed that the city had been "sanitized" and that the government was not letting visitors see the "real Rio." The environmental and economic problems of the city and its children were nevertheless apparent; as world leaders gathered under the glare of television lights, children were playing in nearby sewers.

Life after the summit

Although visitors to the country were warned repeatedly about street crime, thousands of heavily armed Brazilian soldiers and police throughout the city kept security tight and children relatively invisible.

Poverty, police protection and wealth clashed in stark contradiction

during the entire meeting.

The first sentence of the June 4 *Earth Summit Bulletin* read, "Amidst the chirping of cellular phones, the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development officially opened yesterday morning." Said one taxi driver, "If the government can protect you [international visitors], they can protect us." However, many local residents were cynical about life after the Earth Summit. Would the streets return to the usual cycle of homelessness, danger and theft? they asked.

'Touch them with the Gospel'

Although the official United Nations-sponsored meeting was held in an isolated conference center miles from the center city, the religious community chose to meet in poorer areas to express solidarity with Rio's underclass.

Interfaith delegations met with people from *favelas*, Brazil's infamous poverty-ridden slums, to address issues of inequity in the society. Five Anglicans from abroad attended a confirmation service at Christ Episcopal Church on Pentecost Sunday, then walked with members of the church up to their community in the local *favela*.

Episcopal Bishop Sydney Ruiz of Rio de Janeiro recommended that the Anglicans tour the Mary and Martha House, an interfaith mission located in the *favela*. One of the two women that runs the mission, Helena de Souza, listed some of the activities there: literacy courses, prayer classes, Alcoholics Anonymous, women's job-training courses and a meal program for neighborhood children. De Souza noted, "We organize the children to give them meals, but also take the opportunity to touch them with the Gospel."

Bishop Ruiz called for financial support for organizations that respond to the poverty and social injustice. He also insisted that there was a spiritual dimension to the solutions. "Social concerns of the church should not be paternalistic, but should deal with the inner problems," Ruiz said. He appealed for people to understand the aims of liberation theologians: "We are not leftists, we are not Communists; we are just Christians who are calling for basic rights--food, clothing, schools, health and housing."

92142

Religious leaders support suspension of negotiations with South African government

Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other South African religious leaders have endorsed the decision by the African National Congress (ANC) to suspend dialogue with the South African government. The suspension was declared by the ANC in the wake of a June massacre of more than 40 people in Boipatong township south of Johannesburg.

"We have had enough," Tutu said of the long history of violence. "Our people are human beings, not things."

The ANC condemned the South African government for failing to stop the violence in Boipatong and then halted talks aimed at adopting a constitution establishing majority rule. The government blamed the Boipatong massacre on the continuing rivalry between the ANC and the Inkatha.

ANC President Nelson Mandela said that South African President F.W. de Klerk "has got the capacity to put an end to the violence. He has failed to use that capacity. He either has lost control of those security forces, or the security forces are doing exactly what he wants them to do."

The ANC has called for a thorough investigation of the violence, prosecution of security personnel involved in the massacre, an international group to monitor the violence and the UN Security Council to hold an emergency meeting on the fighting.

"A government that had appeared to be amenable to discussion and persuasion has become arrogant, intransigent," Tutu added. Officials in the South African Council of Churches (SACC) said that it would participate in a national protest campaign organized by the ANC.

In the United States, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning described the recent violence as "deplorable," and suggested that Americans might have to reevaluate the South African government's credibility. "The failure of the government to secure the peace and stop the violence has eroded confidence in the process towards the establishment of a nonracial democracy," Browning said."

Olympic boycott?

In a June 23 statement, Tutu called on international partners in the struggle against apartheid to campaign for the expulsion of South African teams from this summer's Olympic Games in Barcelona unless the government meets three demands: find those responsible for the recent massacre in

Boipatong, form an international monitoring force to avoid a "Yugoslavian nightmare" and place security forces under multiparty control.

"If at least one of these demands is not met before the Olympic Games begin, then the South African team must withdraw," Tutu insisted. South Africa should return to the Olympic Games "in a spirit of celebration and unity," and that is not possible when the country is in "a state of national mourning for our dead and while we are caught up in a deepening political crisis," he said.

"Those who choose to insulate themselves from the suffering and grief caused by this horrific slaughter must realize that they cannot have both a Boipatong and a Barcelona," Tutu added. "If our Olympic committee does not withdraw the team, then it must be expelled from the forthcoming games."

92143

Presiding bishop files court brief urging reversal of capital punishment decision

by Jeffrey Penn

Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning filed an *amicus curiae*, or "friend of the court," brief in the Supreme Court of California on June 5 seeking to overturn a capital punishment decision.

Although the brief did not comment on the guilt or innocence of the convicted defendant in the case, it contended that prosecutors in Alfred Sandoval's murder trial unfairly quoted or paraphrased biblical passages to bolster their call for the death penalty.

"The church finds it offensive that the state attempted to persuade a jury to impose capital punishment by invoking biblical passages," Browning said in the brief. "This is particularly troublesome to the church when...the state's position on capital punishment is contrary to that taken by most main-line religious denominations, and the state's professed interpretation of the Bible in support of its position is plainly contrary to accepted religious thought as enunciated by a broad spectrum of religious scholars."

Although Browning reminded the court that he is publicly opposed to capital punishment on moral grounds and that the Episcopal Church has

officially opposed the death penalty since 1958, he argued that the separation of church and state should prevent prosecutors from citing religious tenets in the case.

"We believe...that a prosecutor's argument for the death penalty must be limited to arguments about the evidence and the legal factors that, in the judgment of the state legislature, justify capital punishment," Browning said. "It follows that the prosecutor may not properly invoke religious authority, which is inevitably outside the evidence and the applicable law.

"Not content to rely on the authority of state law, which the jury had taken an oath to apply, the prosecutor sought to bolster his arguments with religious arguments that are--at the very best--strained and controversial.

"Whatever may be the bounds of permissible references to the Bible or to principles that have religious roots but have become embedded in general social morality, they were exceeded in this case," Browning added.

'Dramatic step in church-state relations'

"This case could represent a dramatic step in church-state relations," said the Rev. Joe Doss, rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Palo Alto, California. Doss, a consultant and adviser on the brief, is a founder and former president of Death Penalty Focus of California, a statewide organization that opposes capital punishment.

Doss described opposition to the death penalty as "the most broadly ecumenical issue on which there is agreement. No mainline Christian denomination supports the death penalty," he said.

In preparation of the brief, Doss gathered an ecumenical team of scholars, who wrote a definitive statement opposing the death penalty that became a supporting appendix to the brief. He noted that all 12 recent presidents of the Society of Christian Ethics and a significant number of theologians had signed the statement.

"What we're saying in this brief is that Scripture can't be used improperly to support the death penalty. It is an abuse or an improper reading of Scripture to do so, and is therefore prejudicial. If a prosecutor uses Scripture to support capital punishment, it is inappropriate," Doss said. "A religious response by a prosecutor who is upholding the law was unnecessary since the law was entirely founded in secular thought."

Churches agree on opposition

Doss cited several reasons why the current case is so important. He said that, if the court overturns the conviction based on the brief, it will set precedent for future cases. Doss said that the case will also have instructional

value. "I don't believe that many members of the mainline denominations understand that the teaching of churches is so firmly against the death penalty. The denominations have not done a good job in getting out the message." He added that the case could "put before the American public" the arguments against the death penalty "in a brand-new way that commands their attention."

However, Doss said that all speculation on the case aside, there was a deeper reason to support the brief and overturn Sandoval's conviction. "We may have helped to save this man's life. Hopefully, the court will overturn this case on this basis."

Doss said that opponents of the death penalty will continue to lend their names to the brief until oral arguments in the case are heard this fall--perhaps as early as August. He predicted that the case could be even more significant if the death penalty receives attention during the presidential campaign.

92144

Panamanian bishop criticizes Bush visit as 'a purely political move'

by Robert Melville

Episcopal Bishop James Ottley of Panama said that President George Bush "showed a total disregard for Panamanian autonomy" in a visit to Panama prior to attending the Earth Summit in Brazil.

Ottley, who is vice-president of the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops, called Bush's June 11 visit "a purely political move rather than something that would benefit the Panamanian people or even improve relations between the two countries."

Bush was prevented from speaking at an outdoor rally in Panama City after riot police dispersed tear gas to break up anti-U.S. demonstrators on nearby streets. His only speech was to a U.S. military community audience in an Albrook Air Force Station hangar.

Bush's visit "was poorly timed and poorly planned, and was something that could have been handled in an airport meeting between [Panamanian] President Endara and President Bush," Ottley added.

Ottley criticized Bush for repeatedly boasting that the United States was

"the greatest and the best" nation in the world. "He wouldn't say that in Japan or Germany or England. Why say it here?" Ottley asked. "As a Panamanian, I felt very let down. He showed a total disregard for Panamanian autonomy and an insensitivity to our people."

Bush had praised Panama for its progress towards democracy and told U.S. service personnel that they "...are partly responsible for that wonderful feeling between Panama and the United States of America." His visit, however, coincided with the murder of a U.S. soldier, several attacks on U.S. installations, an increase in security measures and a heightening of U.S.-Panamanian tensions.

Bush's visit occurred two and a half years after he ordered the U.S. invasion of Panama, which resulted in the deaths of several hundred Panamanians.

Ottley said that both the Panamanian and the U.S. governments "played down" the size of the demonstration. "The point is that no matter how many demonstrators there were or who was responsible for the tear gas, there are a lot of people here who are in disagreement with the invasion."

--Robert Melville is a Volunteer for Mission from the Diocese of Maine serving as communication officer in the Diocese of Panama.

92145

Report on racism audit predicts continuing resistance to change

by Nan Cobbey

Confronting institutional racism in the Episcopal Church is a complicated process and will probably meet resistance, according to the just-released report analyzing the racism audit taken at General Convention last summer.

The racism audit was a 58-question survey about racial attitudes completed by nearly 1,600 people, including bishops, deputies, Episcopal Church Women Triennial delegates and visitors at the convention.

The report of the audit's results--29 pages of text, 144 pages of tables and statistics--described a church struggling with its diversity. The survey

focused on the importance of cultural diversity and its relationship to the Gospel, how racism emerges in the church and the willingness or resistance of church members to change their current attitudes.

"An attitude of acceptance...will make it psychologically possible for more--rather than fewer--members to change," wrote analysts from the National Training Laboratories Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences (NTLIABS) as they encouraged further use of the survey throughout the dioceses and at future conventions.

Lennox Joseph, chief executive officer of NTLIABS, told members of the convention last summer that the results showed "a clear pattern of institutional racism" but he said that he also found "a mandate that the church move forward," developing ways to address the issues.

"For some church members these two objectives are in accord; for others...pursuing cultural diversity is secondary," according to the audit report. Recognizing these differences provides "a special opportunity for people of different perspectives to work together."

The report recommended that the church design, with professional consultants, a program to address race relations and the conflict that some feel between following the Gospel and the need to encourage cultural diversity.

Several patterns were apparent from the report:

- Blacks and Native Americans said that they experience the highest degree of alienation and disrespect from the Episcopal Church. Whites reported the strongest feelings of inclusion and respect.

- Ordained members more than lay members perceived difficulties with racial and ethnic issues, saw more opportunities for change and reported more efforts to bring about change. The report asserted that the House of Deputies displayed reluctance to address institutional racism when it became embroiled in a debate about when to hear preliminary results of the audit.

- People from the Northeast and Far West saw more need for change on matters of race and ethnicity than people from the South and Southwest.

- Bishops tended to see more need for change than clergy and lay members, although the difference was not great.

- Women tended to see more reasons for making changes in the area of race and ethnic relations than men, but men reported actually taking more action to reduce racism than women did.

The report was distributed to members of the Executive Council and the Commission on Racism. It will be published and made available in each diocese, according to Diane Porter, executive for Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries.

--Nan Cobbey is features editor of *Episcopal Life*.

92146

Dialogue with Roman Catholics moves ahead despite obstacles

by James Solheim

Despite a chill in relations between Anglicans and the Vatican, dialogue between Episcopalians and Roman Catholics in the United States has entered a new, more realistic phase.

"There is a lot of new energy," said the Rev. Christopher Agnew, associate ecumenical officer of the Episcopal Church, after the June meeting with Roman Catholics, the first meeting in 18 months. Agnew said that much of that energy comes from the new members of the dialogue, including two Episcopal women theologians. "Half of the participants are new, and they moved very quickly to some practical ideas of improving relations between our two churches," Agnew added.

First item on the agenda of the Baltimore meeting was a very frank assessment of the Vatican's disappointing response to the first report of the international Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue--and why the dialogue has slowed down despite hopeful advances in recent years.

"It was obvious to all of us that we needed more than one approach," Agnew observed. "While we continue the theological dialogues, we are eager also to move towards practical cooperation."

Among the practical issues the dialogue will deal with is a common eucharistic prayer, continued national and regional meetings of ecumenical officers from both churches, ecumenical covenants as well as issues such as intermarriage and the migration of clergy between churches. The ecumenical officers will publish a book next year that will "take a look at all the hot issues between the two churches," Agnew said.

Participants issued a statement at the end of their meeting underscoring their commitment "to the restoration of visible unity and full ecclesial communion between our two churches." While acknowledging "widespread disappointment" with the Vatican's position on the dialogues, the statement said, "We ourselves take up this mission in the United States once again in full knowledge of the discouragement with which many view the slow progress of Christian reconciliation.... We do so because the united witness of Christians

makes an important contribution to the development of peace and justice at this time of heightened tension and conflict in our society."

New co-chairs of the dialogue are Bishop Frank Griswold of the Diocese of Chicago and Archbishop John Snyder of St. Augustine, Florida.

92147

Bishop marches in gay pride parade to promote tolerance

by Kenneth Plate

The escalating violence against gays and lesbians prompted the Bishop of El Camino Real, Richard Shimpfky, to lead a church contingent of clergy and laypersons in the gay pride parade in San Jose, California, on June 14.

"The appalling silence of decent people in positions of leadership and the demonization of gay people by right-wing officials and 'traditional values' groups is largely responsible for this violence," said Shimpfky. "It is important to me to be in the parade as a way of challenging a morality that accuses people for *what* they are not *who* they are as children of God. It is wrong to do that. Gay and lesbian people are being scapegoated and abused."

Shimpfky, whose 18,000-member diocese extends along the central California coast from Palo Alto to San Luis Obispo, is aware that approximately 10 percent of the diocese is gay. "This statistic is true whether you are talking about the Congress of the United States or the local school board or an individual parish of our church." Noting that violence against gays and lesbians has risen as much as 31 percent in 1991, Shimpfky called upon Episcopalians to work to stop "labeling and bashing each other...we're being mutated into something that is neither civilized nor Christian."

San Jose Mayor Susan Hammer opened parade festivities at the Santa Clara County fairgrounds, where the local chapter of Integrity, an organization of gay and lesbian Episcopalians, had an information booth. Due to the extensive media coverage of the bishop's participation, large numbers of gays and lesbians came to the booth with questions about the Episcopal Church.

According to Jim Goddell, Integrity spokesperson, the most common question asked was "Is there a church near where I live?" Also asked were

"What *does* the church think about us" and "Are we *really* welcome?"

"This is Integrity's story for the Decade of Evangelism," Goodell said.

"We are proclaiming the church's welcome, but we also worry about what will happen when these people show up in our parishes."

Positive reaction

Reaction to the bishop's participation in the parade was mostly positive. According to Nancy Cook, executive assistant to the bishop, only one negative telephone call was received at the diocesan offices. "We have been inundated with letters and calls from this diocese and beyond. Ninety percent have been positive," she said.

Shimpfky, who marched in the parade between services at Trinity Cathedral was touched by the numbers of people in the parade who spoke of the pain of family members who were homosexual, many with tears in their eyes. "If I have helped to heal some wounds today, then I am doing my job," Shimpfky said.

--Kenneth Plate is communications officer for the Diocese of El Camino Real.

92148

Presiding bishop will visit black congregations in four states

As part of his efforts to underscore the church's fight against racism, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning will visit black congregations and community organizations in four states, July 23-27.

"The tour will enable the presiding bishop to make personal contact with priests and laity responsible for ministries of several outstanding congregations in the African-American community," said the Rev. Harold Lewis, staff officer for black ministries. Lewis and members of his staff arranged the trip and will accompany the presiding bishop.

First stop will be St. Luke's in New Haven, Connecticut, the third oldest black parish in the Episcopal Church, founded in 1854. Browning will participate in the noon-hour feeding program and celebrate the Eucharist and preach that evening. He will also visit the senior citizens program at St.

Andrew's Church.

On July 24, the team will visit Episcopal Outreach of Pawleys Island, South Carolina, an outreach program cited by President George Bush as one of the "thousand points of light." After touring the facilities, Browning will address summer campers and preach that evening at St. Cyprian's Church in Georgetown.

The presiding bishop will celebrate Eucharist, preach and baptize young people from the community during the July 25 visit to Emmanuel Episcopal Center, a diocesan outreach center in inner-city Memphis, Tennessee. That afternoon he will preach at an ecumenical service at the National Civil Rights Museum, built on the site where Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated.

Final stop on the tour will be Chicago, where Browning will celebrate and preach at the July 26 rededication of St. Edmund's Church and officiate at the dedication of an apartment building rehabilitated to provide housing for low to moderate income families. On the morning of July 27, the presiding bishop will deliver a meditation at the neighborhood feeding program at Sts. George and Matthias and then visit a Head Start program and shelter for battered women operated by St. Thomas Church

[For further information, contact the Rev. Harold Lewis at (212) 922-5208.]

92149

Seamen's Church Institute plans exchange program with Russian maritime union

by Susan Erdey

It is the stroke of midnight on Holy Saturday. Outside the Moscow church dedicated to St. Nicholas, patron saint of seafarers, worshipers stand pressing together, holding their mustard-brown candles dripping tallow.

Led by the Gospel, the cross and icons, a procession circles the church and then enters, greeted by the words, "Christ is risen." It is the first legal celebration of the Easter Vigil since the Russian Revolution 75 years ago.

A group of American clergy among the congregation is visiting on a

very special mission, at the invitation of the Russian maritime workers' union. The group represents the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI), an ecumenical, voluntary agency affiliated with the Episcopal Church, dedicated to serving the hundreds of thousands of seafaring men and women who enter the ports of New York and New Jersey every year. SCI offers hospitality, counseling, emergency assistance and basic human rights advocacy.

The Russian union leaders, some of them Christians who are able to express their faith openly for the first time, were eager to consult with their guests about the spiritual and pastoral care of maritime workers.

The group from America visited union leaders in Moscow, Riga, Odessa and St. Petersburg to explore personnel exchanges that could set in motion the kind of programs that were being sought. And they were seeking advice on how to financially support a system of "Interclubs," hospitality centers in major port cities, since the state subsidies are being withdrawn.

In her role as director of SCI's facility in Newark, New Jersey, Jean Smith has visited a number of Russian ships and is concerned that seafarers receive the kind of support they need. She said that too many of them are having trouble dealing with the freedom. "I'm concerned with issues of substance abuse and AIDS now that Russian seafarers are receiving shore passes all over the world."

Smith said that SCI can assist by producing Russian-language educational materials about AIDS and substance abuse, which she has learned is a serious problem aboard many of the ships.

"We have a potential to make a real difference," Smith added. "We have a ministry to the world, an opportunity to respond to issues of humanitarian need, justice and advocacy--and spiritual nurture."

As a result of the trip, an exchange program will begin this fall, with Russian union leaders visiting New York, followed later by maritime workers from Odessa and St. Petersburg, who will stay for a few months to receive training in the programs of support available at SCI.

--Susan Erdey recently accepted a position as director of communications at St. George's School in Newport, Rhode Island.



news briefs

92150

Episcopalians, Lutherans, Roman Catholics sign covenant

The Diocese of Connecticut joined the Roman Catholic Diocese of Norwich and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's New England Synod in a historic covenant to work together in mission. Bishop Arthur Walmsley said that the covenant was a symbol of "the degree of theological consensus that we have today." While "visible unity probably isn't going to happen as quickly as we had hoped with Vatican II, it will happen in the surprises from our hearts and prayer." Bishop Daniel Reilly of Norwich said that the covenant is an example of "the church living, loving, believing, praying together." He added that differences will not disappear but that the churches "can overcome these differences by praying, working and studying together." The covenant urged parishes to seek "suitable occasions for joint prayer, worship, dialogue and education." It also called for sharing of facilities, worship and educational resources, programs and expertise and common efforts in "Christian witness and action in areas such as public education, social welfare, world peace, social justice, employment, stewardship of creation, housing, environmental preservation and multicultural acceptance."

First Dominican woman priest is ordained

Bishop Julio Cesar Holguin of the Episcopal Diocese of the Dominican Republic ordained that diocese's first woman priest in a ceremony in Santo Domingo on June 7. Rosa Margarita Santana, the newly ordained priest, is a 30-year-old, married woman. She is a native of San Francisco de Macoris and exercises her ministry in San Pedro de Macoris. The Diocese of the Dominican Republic is part of Province IX of the U.S. Episcopal Church.

Urging ecumenism, Carey defends women's ordination

Making his first visit as archbishop of Canterbury to the Geneva headquarters of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Dr. George Carey underscored the Church of England's commitment to the world ecumenical body. Carey acknowledged that his church has reservations about certain directions taken by the WCC but said he was visiting the Geneva offices "to explore [and] to learn" how the Anglican Communion could contribute to the WCC's work. Speaking at chapel, Carey pointed to the "theology of baptism" as an unfulfilled force for Christian unity. "If we believe that baptism in the name of the Trinity unites us with God himself and makes us members of his family, what does this mean for the churches separated eucharistically?" Carey asked. He emphasized that church unity could only be achieved by "confronting the things that divide us." When questioned about women's ordination in that context, Carey said, "If I believe that the ordination of women is biblically, historically, humanly right, then that is non-negotiable."

Church commission seeks to ease legislative process

The Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church, meeting in Columbia, Illinois, April 26-28, responded to the legislative logjam evident at last year's General Convention in Phoenix where a record 582 resolutions were introduced. In an effort to alleviate that problem, the commission urged procedural changes to streamline the legislative process. It recommended that bishops and deputies propose resolutions through their dioceses or provinces; that individuals propose no more than three resolutions; and that a resolution proposed by a bishop or deputy be endorsed by at least two additional bishops or deputies, with all three of the parties from different dioceses.

Yeltsin affirms importance of the church

Explaining his presence at Pentecost services in Moscow prior to departing for the United States, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, long an avowed "sincere atheist," said simply, "I came here to undergo a cleansing before a long journey." Yet Yeltsin's attendance at Trinity-Sergius Monastery and his follow-up meeting with Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexi II symbolized not only the Russian leader's spiritual renewal but also the sweeping acceptability of public religious expression in contemporary post-Communist Russia. Although baptized as a baby, Yeltsin said that his religious outlook was shaped by official Communist ideology that portrayed monotheism as "the opiate of the people." "I am acquiring a different world outlook which is probably connected with my psychological state and the

situation in society," Yeltsin explained. "[Church] is the only place where you don't worry something is happening somewhere else.... For me [church attendance] has become necessary and not only from my personal and spiritual point of view."

U.S. Roman Catholics clearly favor women priests

Two out of three Roman Catholics in the United States now oppose the Vatican's traditional policy prohibiting women priests, according to a Gallup poll conducted in May. The poll indicated that 67 percent of lay Roman Catholics agreed that the ordination of women priests "would be a good thing." That figure represented an 18 percent increase over a similar poll conducted only seven years ago. At the same time, the poll found that Pope John Paul II retained a high approval rating, with 84 percent maintaining that the pope was "doing a good job leading the church." Sister Maureen Fiedler, co-director of Catholics Speak Out, one of the groups commissioning the poll, said that the survey proved that "the people have developed a whole new consensus of opinion and behavior different from that of the bishops, but which they believe is morally acceptable to their consciences and faithful to the [Roman] Catholic tradition." Bishop Raymond J. Boland, chairman of the U.S. Roman Catholic bishops' communication committee, responded, "The church decides its doctrine on 2,000 years of traditional teaching based on the Scriptures and the message of our Lord Jesus Christ. We're not about to change it just because of the polls." The poll also found that 83 percent of U.S. lay Roman Catholics favor the use of condoms, 41 percent view abortion as morally acceptable in most circumstances, and 46 percent consider committed homosexual relationships to be morally acceptable.

Ecumenical youth event held in Pennsylvania

Nearly 200 Episcopal, Lutheran and Roman Catholic youth in northwestern Pennsylvania participated in a three-day ecumenical rally at Gannon College, Erie, in mid-May. The rally marked the realization of an idea shared by the bishops of the three denominations, Episcopal Bishop Robert D. Rowley, Jr., Lutheran Bishop Paul E. Spring, and Roman Catholic Bishop Donald W. Trautman. Each of the bishops delivered homilies at the rally on the theme "The Way, the Truth, the Life." The ecumenical rally mixed recreational activities and group discussions, with 17 workshops covering a broad variety of social concerns.

Lutheran ministry study proposes adding office of deacons

The task force on the study of ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will recommend that "approved and called candidates for diaconal ministry shall be ordained as diaconal ministers as part of the office of ministry." The move was "a very bold move, made very soberly, following prayer," said study director Paul Nelson. The task force will recommend that the title of bishop be retained and that bishops be elected for a renewable six-year term, instead of the present four-year term. Bishops would be installed rather than ordained "as a form within the one office of ministry." The task force sought to "emphasize, in constitutional language and therefore in practice, the pastoral episcopal functions of the office of bishop, along with what many feel is an existing perception of the bishop as chief executive officer," said Dr. John Reumann of Philadelphia, who chairs the task force. The recommendations now go to the church's division of ministry meeting next March, with final decisions at the Churchwide Assembly in August of 1993. The ELCA postponed its study of proposals for full communion with the Episcopal Church until completing its study of ministry. Orders of ministry differ between the two churches, and the role of bishops is a major point of contention for those who oppose full communion.

German evangelicals raise storm over woman bishop

Evangelicals in Germany have voiced sharp opposition to the election of the first woman Lutheran bishop, 47-year-old Maria Jepsen, who will soon succeed Peter Krusche as bishop of Hamburg. According to the Evangelical Alliance news agency of Germany, 70 to 80 pastors in northern Germany are considering early retirement rather than serving under a woman bishop. Prominent evangelicals characterized Jepsen's election as "one of the worst spiritual catastrophes," surpassing even Nazi ideology in spiritual damage to the church. Christoph Morgner, the leader of Germany's largest evangelical movement, warned that the ordination of a woman bishop could jeopardize moves toward Christian unity. He pointed out that both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, which comprise 1.2 billion of the world's 1.7 billion Christians, oppose women's ordination. In responding to her critics, Jepsen said that evangelicals are an indispensable part of the Protestant church even though their view on women is "a remnant from the Middle Ages."

U.S. Lutherans elect first woman bishop

Following closely on the heels of the election of a woman bishop in the Lutheran Church in Germany, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) elected the Rev. April Ulring Larson the first woman bishop on June

12. Currently the assistant to the bishop of the ELCA's Southeastern Minnesota Synod in Rochester, Minnesota, Larson will succeed Bishop Stefan Guttormsson as bishop of the LaCrosse Area Synod in Wisconsin. Larson, 42, will join 64 synodical bishops in the ELCA Conference of Bishops. The ELCA has ordained women as pastors since 1970. Women constitute approximately 11 percent of the ELCA's active clergy.

WCC shaping plans for new program structure

Representatives of the four program units of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the council's advisory groups on church and ecumenical relations, interreligious relationships and communications met in Evian, France, in May to map out strategies appropriate to the revised WCC program structure. The Unity and Renewal commission (Unit I) called for joint work with other WCC sectors on the biblical and theological basis for the council's work and on the Christian theological significance of the Jews. The proposed agenda of the Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation commission (Unit III) included work on racism, poverty and the environment. The commissions on Mission, Education and Witness (Unit II) and Sharing and Service (Unit IV) also submitted recommendations, to be taken up when the WCC's Central Committee acts on all recommendations in August.

Massachusetts adopts guidelines on sexual abuse cases

After two years of study and listening to the experiences of those victimized by sexual harassment and abuse by clergy, the Diocese of Massachusetts has adopted a new set of procedures for responding to allegations. The new policy establishes a committee of four "advocates" to respond to the emotional and spiritual needs of victims. A committee including clergy, laity as well as legal and mental health professionals will work with the bishop to investigate allegations, conduct interventions and recommend sanctions, if necessary, that could include suspension from the ministry. The policy also provides for the pastoral care and support of spouses and families of both the accuser and the accused and also the parishes involved. "The purpose of both committees, and the names of its members, will be made public so that anyone who needs an advocate or wishes to make a complaint can do so readily and without fear of reprisal," the procedures stated.

PB's Fund helps release a truck in Uganda

A water tank truck intended for a village in Uganda was impounded recently by customs officials seeking \$8,000 in tariffs. When the tariff was

lowered, the truck, a gift of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, was released with some help from the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief as well as parishes, chapters and individuals. The brotherhood, a ministry to men in the Episcopal Church, is also developing a water filtration system in the village.

Ecumenical meeting marks WCC's reentry into China

The ecumenical gathering that met in Nanjing, China, in May to respond to regional problems was the first that the World Council of Churches (WCC) was allowed to co-sponsor in that country in over 40 years. Regional ecumenical bodies and outside agencies outlined a three-year cooperative plan to enable the region's churches to confront problems as diverse as the vulnerability of migrant workers, environment and development and tourism and prostitution. The consultation urged churches in northeast Asia to monitor their governments' development policies, and Southeast Asian churches were called upon to advance democratic processes in the face of military and authoritarian rule. The consultation issued a report calling on interfaith and intrafaith dialogue to meet the challenges of "fundamentalism" and "divisiveness" in South Asian countries.

WCC official hails measure on internally displaced persons

World Council of Churches (WCC) Migration Secretary Patrick Taran recently hailed a resolution adopted by a United Nations commission as "a significant step forward in...the situation of internally displaced persons." The resolution of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights called on U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to appoint a special representative to determine whether additional mechanisms of protection are needed for persons forced from their homes but not expatriated. The WCC and the Quaker U.N. office have been especially active over the past several years in urging the international community to recognize the plight of so-called internal emigres.

Bible societies formulate plans to end mutual competition

Seventeen Bible societies have decided to meet regularly as the Forum of Bible Agencies in order to cooperate on the translation and international distribution of the Bible. At a recent meeting at the Reading, England, headquarters of the United Bible Societies, the 17 agencies targeted various languages that still lack a translation of the Bible and discussed plans for cooperative distribution of the Bible in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian effort was suggested as a potential model for future joint endeavors.

Search begins for Van Culin successor

The formal process is underway to select a successor to the Rev. Canon Samuel Van Culin who is retiring as secretary-general of the Anglican Communion in December 1994. The Most Rev. Brian Davis, primate of New Zealand, is chairing the search committee, which includes Pamela Chinnis, president of the House of Deputies of the U.S. Episcopal Church, and the Rev. Canon Roger Symon, secretary for Anglican Communion Affairs at Lambeth Palace (London). Symon is handling all enquiries and correspondence related to the search. Archbishop Davis said that "the process has begun at this early stage [because] the person appointed will have a unique opportunity to serve our communion at a critical time in its history." The search committee said that it expects to submit a short list of nominees at the first joint meeting of the primates of the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Consultative Council, scheduled for January of next year in Cape Town, South Africa. Van Culin has held his current post for nearly a decade, having previously served as executive for world mission at the Episcopal Church Center in New York.

Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are July 29 and August 19.



news features

92151

Excerpts from the presiding bishop's address to the Executive Council

Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 16, 1992

As we begin our time together, in the midst of visions and decisions, I remind myself and all of us that it is *God's* purpose we are serving, and not our own. God continues to work out the divine purpose in ways that surprise us. As I stand before you this morning, I pray that, grounded in prayer and linked with one another, we will be faithful instruments of that purpose.

My dear friends, we have gathered here in Albuquerque as the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church. That may seem like an obvious statement, but I believe it bears restating. At times of social confusion and dissolution, of outer restlessness and uncertainty, of fear and fragmentation, I believe we are called first to recover our own grounding. These are such times. I have no doubt. So, let me remind us of where we are in all of this. Let us look for a moment at our grounding.

Each and all of us are part of the church described in our Prayer Book catechism as "the community of the New Covenant." We have been brought together to do our work in the governance of our church, not because we are holy, but because the church is holy. Our catechism tells us that the church is holy "because the Holy Spirit dwells in it, consecrates its members, and guides them to do God's work." For that reason we gather here. We--struggling pilgrims, frail and too often irresolute, sometimes overwhelmed with the pain of the world and burdened by its seemingly limitless problems--God is using us. We are here to do our part in carrying out the mission of the church, which we have been taught is to "restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."

Why are we here?

So, we come together, and we remember who we are, and whose we are, and what we are about. We are not here primarily as social activists--though we may each play that role, at some time or another. We are not here as political scientists or as sociologists, though we may have those skills or be informed by them. We are here to pursue our mission, as we, in the words of the catechism, proclaim the Gospel, promote justice, peace and love.

We are here together *not* because we have common interests--though we do. We are *not* here because we all agree on some program or activity, and we don't--at least not all of the time. We are here as ministers of the church, through our baptism, and to represent other ministers of the church. We are here as members of the "blessed company of all faithful people."

I want to share with you a recent article in the *New York Times* that said to me how very urgent is the need for us, the church, to recover our sense of what it means to be the church. Under the headline "Protestant Baby Boomers Not Returning to Church," I found a frightening measure of societal health. It perhaps also gave some indication of how we have failed as a church to live in ways that clearly demonstrate what it is to *be* the church. We have heard from the demographers that a so-called "lost generation" of baby boomers left the mainline churches in the 1970s and 1980s. In a story reporting a study of just *why* they are not coming back, one sentence jumped out at me: "It's just that the church doesn't do anything for them."

The study showed that most of those persons surveyed believe Jesus is the Son of God, that there is a life hereafter and that the Bible was divinely inspired. Even so, they are not part of the church because it "doesn't do anything for them."

How have we come to this? How have we so devolved from "take up your cross and follow me" to a attitude that the church exists to "do something" for those who name themselves as Christians? We have a lot of educating to do about what it means to be a Christian. We have treasures and joys to share. We have work to do, and we need all of God's children to do it. That is what evangelism is all about. If we could *be* the church, and show what it means to be the church, and challenge and invite others to join us, those baby boomers would be breaking down the doors to get some of what we have and yearn to share.

My dear friends, in no area of our life are we more challenged to be the church than in the eradication of racism. I believe that in order to confront the sin of racism as God would have us do, we must ground ourselves in what it means to be the church. That is the way of faithfulness. God gave us this holy church and promised to be with it. Our actions need to

be informed by our knowledge that we are in God and of God. There is no question that we must work on racism and we must do this *as* the church. Being the church will not only inform our task but will also give us the strength for it.

Grim days in urban America

We have been led by God's spirit for some time to put the eradication of racism at the top of our agenda. If we hadn't known this before the Arizona legislature failed to declare a paid Martin Luther King state holiday in 1990 and all hell broke loose, we certainly knew it then. We committed ourselves to an intense effort against racism in Phoenix, and the General Convention set our course. It did not take the fires of Los Angeles to illuminate this for us. Those grim days in urban areas of our nation only affirmed that, whatever our efforts, they are desperately needed. They showed us that the task is great, and the time is now, as tensions went from simmer to boil.

As most of you know, I went to Los Angeles in the days immediately following the outbreak of violence to stand in solidarity with the people there on behalf of the whole church. The time meant a great deal to me though it was not an easy time. It was extraordinarily painful to talk with people who had lost all they had, who were afraid, perhaps whose homes were intact but whose souls were deeply wounded. There were deep wounds to all races and pain enough for everyone.

I also saw how we, the church at our best, can begin to rise to the occasion. I saw grief and horror transformed by human caring and compassion. It was another time in my life when I have been called to reflect that out of every tragedy comes an opportunity for revisioning, for transformation. That is the lesson of the Cross.

I am returning to California this weekend to participate in the consecration of a bishop in San Diego and to Los Angeles, and on Sunday, June 21, I will go to Compton, a community that is 98-percent black and that has suffered great devastation and deep wounding. It is very clear to me that the church must make a continuing witness of our solidarity with those who struggle to rebuild, to heal the wounds and to be instruments of transformation.

Frightening dynamics

I said earlier that we might be informed by political scientists, and I want to share with you a right-to-the-point and devastating analysis by Andrew Hacker, of the political science faculty at Queens College. His latest book I

would recommend to all of you. It is called *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*. In what I would call a dispassionate and analytical fashion, he describes the racial climate of this country. He goes beyond depressing statistics to the frightening dynamics that make it possible for people of all races to fear, and then hate, one another. Though he is specifically addressing racial conflict between blacks and whites, the dynamics he describes are present between other racial groups as well.

In defining racism, Dr. Hacker says the following: "It will be proposed here that all white Americans, regardless of their political persuasions, are well aware of how black people have suffered due to inequities imposed upon them by white America. As has been emphasized, whites differ in how they handle that knowledge. Yet white people who disavow responsibility deny an everyday reality: that to be black is to be consigned to the margins of American life. It is because of this that no white American, including those who insist that opportunities exist for persons of every race, would change places with even the most successful black American. All white Americans realize that their skin comprises an inestimable asset. It opens doors and facilitates freedom of movement. It serves as a shield from insult and harassment. Indeed, having been born white can be taken as a sign: your preferment is both ordained and deserved. Its value persists not because a white appearance automatically brings success and status, since there are no such guarantees. What it does ensure is that you will not be regarded as black, a security which is worth so much that no one who has it has ever given it away."

'I know sin when I see it'

My dear friends, in response to this all I can say is that I know sin when I see it. This is sin. Let us not shrink from naming it for what it is. This is deep sin that was bred in greed and leads on to violence, to the death of hope, of dreams, and to tragic waste of human potential.

We cannot set ourselves apart from this. It does no good to say that you or I or our neighbor is "not personally involved." How can we not be involved when we are part of a society--and let me say it--a privileged and empowered part of a society that tolerates the existence of a permanent underclass in our midst? We are involved.

How can we say we are not involved when that same society of which we are a part not only allows but facilitates the holding on to privilege and abuse of power by white people at a bitter cost to everyone else? We are involved.

How can we say we are not involved when within the structures of our

own church we find subtle and not so subtle indications of the racism that infests our own society? Our racism audit gave us a way to begin working on that, and I pray God we have the strength and the humility to confront our own sin.

Surely, surely as people saved by the redeeming love of Jesus we know not only what sin is, we know what repentance is. We know what it is to fall to our knees, to ask for forgiveness and for healing. As we look to be agents of change, of transformation we must each begin in our own heart.

A very gifted black writer spoke to this in 1961. James Baldwin asked us to reflect on the cost of change when he wrote the following words:

"Any real change implies the break-up of the world as one has always known it, the loss of all that gave one identity, the end of safety. And at such a moment, unable to see and not daring to imagine what the future will bring forth, one clings to what one knows, or thought one knew; to what one possessed or dreamed that one possessed. Yet it is only when one is able, without bitterness or self-pity, to surrender a dream one has long cherished, or a privilege one has long possessed, that one is set free--that one has set oneself free--for higher dreams, for greater privileges."

Battle against racism

Not one of us sitting here underestimates the challenges before us. Many initiatives are underway, and you will be hearing more about them later in this meeting. As we work, we must keep in mind a holistic vision of our battle against racism because it is not an isolated issue. It is tightly bound up with other social, economic and environmental issues. If, for example, the Environmental Stewardship Team, appointed after General Convention, does not see that it has a role to play in addressing racial issues, then we will be a divided church. If our outreach in this Decade of Evangelism is disconnected from our efforts against racism, we are losing the moment.

All of the churches are working on initiatives against racism, and we have agreed that we must work more ecumenically. Groups *within* our church need to cooperate as well. I applaud the Episcopal Urban Caucus for their seven-point program and am grateful to the Union of Black Episcopalians for their prodding and keeping the issue before us. I welcome that challenge and encourage other groups to challenge and sensitize us to their concerns.

In your small groups I am going to ask that you look at General Convention Resolution B-051S as a way of talking about the various aspects of racism and our response as a church and as the Executive Council.

Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard University, has written persuasively about the need for political leaders to define and reinforce the

ideologies that influence our priorities and our behavior. He says that the prevailing ideology has a pessimistic view of humanity as self-interested creatures who put private material rewards first, thus the emphasis on market economy to, as he says, "harness our natural avarice for constructive social ends." Dr. Bok goes on to say: "In the last analysis, no system can rely so heavily on personal gain and private ambition and somehow have it all turn out for the good. No laws, no police, no regulations, no invisible hand will ever manage to keep all of these self-interested motives completely in check or mobilize them to meet all of the needs that must be met in our society. That is why, in my view," he continues, "any viable ideology that we choose for the future must give a prominent place to strengthening those aspects of human nature that are most positive, more generous, more other-regarding, more civic minded than is the pursuit of private gain."

In it for the long haul

I couldn't agree more with Dr. Bok. And I believe the church has a major role to play in this and we are in it for the long haul. There is no quick fix or simple solution to problems that have plagued humankind since the fall. There are just a lot of small, difficult steps over a hilly and winding path. We can't make the journey all at once. We have to be accountable every day. By "we" I mean each and all of us, corporately and as individuals before our maker. We have to keep asking the deep questions and being the church every day. We have to keep asking what we can do--in our homes, our communities, our churches and everywhere we find ourselves. We have to keep asking what we can do, and praying for the strength to do it. The task is enormous--but the power of God is truly unlimited.

I want to share with you that I spent an afternoon earlier this month with a wonderful group of young men and women who are part of our Advocacy, Witness and Justice department at the Episcopal Church Center. These dedicated young people, mostly persons of color, bear no resemblance to the baby boomers I spoke of earlier who don't bother with the church because it doesn't do anything for them. They haven't yet lost hope in the church. However, during our time together, they challenged me and all of us to our seriousness about dealing with racism.

One of the young women, Rose Brunell, shared with me a little essay written by her eight-year-old daughter, Chantelle. It was called "Marvelous Me." I want to read just a part of it.

"My name is Chantelle Brunell. I will be 9-years-old on June 24. I have a wonderful family. I help my mother get ready for work. My baby brother is learning how to walk early because I am helping him. I know that I

am a special person. I am special because I always try to help people. Day by day I am getting better in reading and math. That makes me proud. I care about all of the people of the world and wish that I could do more to help the homeless people."

Chantelle is a special person. She is a child of God who feels good about herself and is able to write an essay called "Marvelous Me." It makes you stop and wonder in the context of what we know about racism. It makes you stop and wonder how she will survive and flourish when she gets the message from society that she would be better if only she were white.

God bless this child. God bless her and help her and help all of us as your church to bring in the day when the Chantelles of this world grow up continuing to feel proud of who they are and what they have to offer to our life together. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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(Editors note: The following is a statement summarizing the consensus on issues addressed at the Worldwide Anglican Encounter in Salvador, Brazil, March 29-April 3. [See ENS coverage of the encounter in the April 10 issue.] The statement was drafted by an international team of participants and is based on plenary and small group sessions at the encounter.)

Worldwide Anglican Encounter--A Celebration of Hope

At this midpoint of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, we challenge the church to take the decade more seriously, and to recognize that the decade is not just about women's participation in the church, but is about solidarity with all women in all aspect of their lives.

We challenge the church to commit its resources (of money, personnel and attention) to supporting the aims of the decade.

We call upon the church to affirm the alternative economic, political and relational models that women are offering to the world.

In particular, we call for commitment and action to the following:

■ Society and culture are patriarchal. The church is complicit in this. The teachings of the church often support the subordination and marginalization of women.

We call upon the church to affirm the feminist theological and spiritual contributions of women.

We call upon the church to affirm feminist theological scholarship (biblical, theological, ethical, historical).

We call upon the church to make available resources for publishing the scholarship of women.

■ Prostitution and the other problems that attend it: street children, early pregnancy, AIDS, sex tourism trade, violence as entertainment.

We challenge the church to take more seriously all forms of violence against women and to determine ways to respond locally, nationally and internationally to this growing violence.

■ The world economic situation. The external debt crisis and the proliferation of transnational corporations, both of which have serious implications for the lives of women.

We ask the church to engage in serious reflection on the possibility and ethical implications of debt reduction, restructuring or cancellation.

We call upon the all our churches to work to empower churches in the affected countries to influence debt policy within their own countries.

We challenge the church to call for more governmental control of transnational corporations, particularly in reference to their exploitation of female labor.

■ 500 years of colonialism and neocolonialism have endangered the life and existence of indigenous peoples and of people of African descent brought to these lands as slaves. These years have seen the genocide of people and their cultures, of land stolen from people and of people stolen from their lands.

We challenge the churches to stand in solidarity with, and affirm the

struggle of, indigenous peoples for their right to their lands and to lives of justice and dignity.

We challenge the churches to recognize the wealth of spiritual and cultural resources that indigenous people can offer challenge to the church to learn from the sacramental relationship to creation that affirms the bond between humanity and the environment in which we live.

We challenge the churches to fight all forms of racism and to support blacks in their struggle for human rights.

We challenge the church to lay its body down between governments and the legitimate struggles of the poor and the marginalized.

We challenge each Christian to educate herself or himself about the situations of their sisters in different parts of the world, to pray for them and to be prepared to act in solidarity with them. We recognize that this will often necessitate changes in lifestyles and will demand lives of risk.

■ The continued missionary structures of the church.

We challenge the church to oppose these structures and to seek and teach ways to empower people and churches at a local level, and to respect all people's rights to self-determination.

■ We have heard the challenge from the church's youth to an exclusive church that marginalizes the visions and perspectives of young people.

We challenge the church to empower the youth, and we challenge the youth to use that power to act prophetically.

We call upon the church to recognize the danger and hardship faced by youth throughout the world who struggle for justice and for survival.

■ Meeting in Brazil, we are very conscious of the issues of damage to the environment and, consequently, the lives of people.

We call upon the church to take a leadership role in the preservation of

the environment.

We call upon all governments, and particularly upon governments of countries that, like the United States, have a disproportionate share of power in the world, to attend and support the environmental conference scheduled for June in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.